Irradiation Processing of Food

1811. PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that irradiation processing of food would help the country save Rs. 25,000 crore worth foodgrains;

(b) if so, whether Government have not so far followed such a process; and

(c) whether the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre has submitted any proposal in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ATOMIC ENERGY (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) Radiation processing can be used effectively for food grain disinfestation. However, it is difficult to quantify the savings. The technology needs to be coupled with appropriate packaging and storage system.

(b) The Government has already set up a Cobalt-60 based facility for radiation processing of spices at Vashi, Navi Mumbai. Another Cobalt-60 based facility for processing of Onion for sprout control is under construction at Lasalgaon, in Nasik District of Maharashtra State, which is likely to be commissioned in the next year. There are no facilities for radiation processing of grains so far.

(c) No, Sir. Efforts are in progress to bring in private entrepreneurs and State Government agencies for setting up such facilities in the country.

Generation of Nuclear Power

1812. SHRI P.N. SIVA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have prepared a plan to increase generation of nuclear power in the next twenty years;

(b) if so, whether any details have been worked out with regard to setting up of more nuclear power plants; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?